Small Group Discussion + Leader Guide

Sunday - October 11, 2026

Preached By: Matt Alexander

"Have You Been To Shiloh?"

Stand Alone Message

1 Samuel 3:1-21

PROBING QUESTION:

What does Shiloh teach us about the kind of people God calls us to be?

1. **At Shiloh,** we see our need for God's Word. Vs.1-3
2. **At Shiloh,** we see the cost of obeying God's Word. Vs. 4-18
3. **At Shiloh, we see the faithfulness of the God who speaks. Vs. 19-21**

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Encourage group members to have their Bibles open to 1 Samuel 3 throughout the discussion. Open your time together in prayer, asking God to make His Word clear and to produce genuine obedience in each person present.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- When God's Word is rare, it is often a reflection of spiritual decline among His people. The answer is not a better program but a return to faithful proclamation of Scripture.
- Obedience to God's Word carries a cost. Samuel's willingness to deliver a difficult message to Eli demonstrates that faithfulness sometimes requires courage.

- Our confidence in the mission rests not in the abilities of the messenger or the size of the church, but in the God who accomplishes His purposes through His Word.
- Past faithfulness does not guarantee future fruitfulness. Shiloh itself became a warning against spiritual complacency and religious presumption.
- The Great Commission does not begin when we board an airplane. It begins with a heart surrendered to Jesus Christ, right where we are.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Opening Question

Start here to help the group ease into conversation.

1. What is one thing from the sermon that stood out to you, challenged you, or raised a question in your mind?

Section 1 — At Shiloh, We See Our Need for God's Word

Read 1 Samuel 3:1-3

2. The sermon noted that "word from the LORD was rare" in Samuel's day, and that this statement came against a backdrop of spiritual decline and corrupt leadership. What do you think it looks like when God's Word becomes rare in a church today? What conditions tend to produce that kind of spiritual environment?

3. The pastor said, "God's people cannot live faithfully apart from God's revelation." How intentional are you personally about engaging with Scripture outside of Sunday morning? What habits or obstacles shape your relationship with God's Word during the week?

4. The sermon drew a direct connection between the spiritual need in Malawi and the spiritual need in Madison, pointing out that Romans 3:23 applies to everyone regardless of geography or culture. How does that reality shape the way you think about your neighbors, coworkers, and family members who do not know Christ?

Section 2 — At Shiloh, We See the Cost of Obeying God's Word

Read 1 Samuel 3:4-18

5. Samuel was afraid to tell Eli what God had revealed, but he did not hide the message. The sermon stated, "Faithfulness to God requires obedience even when obedience is difficult." Can you think of a time when you knew what God was calling you to do but found it difficult to follow through? What made it hard, and what helped you move forward?

6. The pastor referenced James 1:22, which warns against being hearers of the Word who deceive themselves rather than doers. In what areas of your life is there a gap between what you know Scripture says and how you are actually living? How does the group hold one another accountable in those areas?

7. The sermon challenged the congregation with several pointed questions: What would happen if every member took personal responsibility for sharing the gospel? What if every family began praying for lost people? Take a moment to sit with those questions. How would you honestly answer them for yourself right now?

Section 3 — At Shiloh, We See the Faithfulness of the God Who Speaks

Read 1 Samuel 3:19-21

8. The sermon pointed out a striking contrast in the chapter. It opened with the Word of the Lord being rare and closed with God revealing Himself through Samuel at Shiloh. The pastor said, "What made the difference? God graciously raised up a servant through whom He would speak." How does that truth shape the way you think about your own role in God's mission? What does it mean to be a faithful vessel rather than the source of the message?

9. The pastor referenced Romans 1:16, emphasizing that the power belongs to the gospel, not to the messenger. How does that truth

either relieve pressure or challenge complacency in the way you approach gospel conversations?

10. The sermon used Jeremiah 7:12 to warn that Shiloh's history did not guarantee its future. The pastor said directly, "Yesterday's faithfulness does not excuse today's disobedience." How does that warning apply to your own spiritual life? How does it apply to this group or to Fusion Church as a whole?

Gospel Reflection

11. The sermon closed with a clear gospel invitation, reminding the group that church attendance, baptism, and religious activity cannot save anyone. For those in the group who have trusted Christ, how clearly can you articulate the gospel to someone who has never heard it? Take a few minutes as a group to practice explaining it in your own words.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Choose one or more of the following to put into practice before your group meets again.

- **Pray by name.** Write down the names of three people in your life who do not know Jesus Christ. Commit to praying for them daily this week and look for an opportunity to begin a spiritual conversation with at least one of them.

- **Engage the Word.** Identify one specific time in your weekly schedule where you will read and reflect on Scripture outside of Sunday morning. Share that commitment with someone in the group who can follow up with you.

- **Close the gap.** Identify one area where you know what God's Word calls you to do but you have not yet obeyed. Write it down, confess it to a trusted person in the group, and take one concrete step toward obedience this week.

- **Pray for Shiloh Baptist Church.** Spend time this week praying specifically for the new congregation established in Malawi. Pray for genuine discipleship, qualified leadership, and continued gospel witness in surrounding villages.

- **Share the gospel.** Before the group meets again, look for one opportunity to share the gospel with someone in your community. Come prepared to tell the group what happened.

CLOSING THOUGHT

The pastor closed the sermon with these words:

"What makes Shiloh special isn't where it's located. It's the God whose Word is proclaimed there."

That truth applies to every home, every workplace, every neighborhood, and every small group represented in this room. Close your time together by asking God to make each person present a faithful witness to the gospel, right where they are.

Close in prayer. *Consider praying specifically for the lost people whose names were written down during the application time.*